

General Certificate of Education
June 2006
Advanced Subsidiary Examination



GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
Unit 3 Features of a Representative Democracy

GOV3

Tuesday 6 June 2006 1.30 pm to 2.30 pm

For this paper you must have:

- an 8-page answer book

Time allowed: 1 hour

Instructions

- Use blue or black ink or ball-point pen.
- Write the information required on the front of your answer book. The *Examining Body* for this paper is AQA. The *Paper Reference* is GOV3.
- Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.
In Section A, answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.
In Section B, answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.
- Do all rough work in the answer book. Cross through any work you do not want marked.

Information

- The maximum mark for this paper is 60.
- The marks for part questions are shown in brackets.
- You are reminded of the need for good English and clear presentation in your answers. All questions should be answered in continuous prose. Quality of Written Communication will be assessed in all answers.

Advice

- You are advised to read through the examination paper before you attempt the questions.
- You are advised to spend the same amount of time on each question.

Answer **one** question from Section A and **one** question from Section B.

SECTION A

Answer **either** Question 1 **or** Question 2.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

1 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Devolved and Local Government

The United Kingdom has traditionally been a heavily centralised state in which *local government* has enjoyed no constitutional independence from central government. However, Labour's post-1997 devolution reforms radically changed the distribution of powers within the United Kingdom. In addition to creating a Scottish Parliament and a Welsh Assembly, the Government established a new authority and an elected Mayor for London, and promoted initiatives in regional government. These reforms have had varying effects. For example, whilst they have given the people of Scotland and Wales more control over their own lives, they have done little to alter the powers and independence of local government which remains heavily regulated by the centre.

Source: adapted from G PEELE 'Politics in England and Wales', in P DUNLEAVY *et al.*, *Developments in British Politics 7*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2003

- (a) Explain the term *local government* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Labour's post-1997 reforms of devolved and regional government have radically changed the distribution of powers within the UK.' Discuss. (22 marks)

OR

2 Study the passage below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

Text from P COCKER and A JONES, *Contemporary British Politics and Government*, Liverpool Academic Press, 2002, p37. Not reproduced here due to third-party copyright constraints.

- (a) Explain the term *European Parliament* used in the passage. (8 marks)
- (b) 'The House of Commons is too dominant within the Westminster Parliament.'
Discuss. (22 marks)

Turn over for the next section

Turn over ►

SECTION B

Answer **either** Question 3 **or** Question 4.

Each question carries 30 marks.

EITHER

3 Study the extract below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

The Civil Service

Under modern conditions, civil service neutrality is likely to prove difficult to maintain and, therefore, the search for alternative arrangements has already begun. Next Steps Agencies, for example, might be seen as an attempt to make their chief executives personally accountable. Special advisers, moreover, have now become institutionalised within government. Blair's Government has appointed over seventy special advisers, some of whom, like Alistair Campbell, Blair's former Press Secretary, have been more powerful than ministers, particularly *junior ministers*. Nevertheless, while some argue that a gradual politicisation is taking place, there still remains a strong case for British civil servants to remain permanent, politically neutral and anonymous.

Source: adapted from J GREENWOOD, 'Should the Civil Service become fully politicised?', in L ROBINS and B JONES (Eds), *Debates in British Politics Today*, Manchester University Press, 2000

- (a) Explain the term *junior ministers* used in the extract. (8 marks)
- (b) 'Permanent, politically neutral and anonymous.'
How far does the British civil service still reflect these key features? (22 marks)

OR

- 4 Study the passage below and answer parts (a) and (b) which follow.

The Weakness of the Prime Minister

In 1979, the Callaghan Government was defeated in Parliament and Labour lost the general election which this made necessary. The next Prime Minister, Thatcher, weakened by the resignations of key ministers, was herself driven from office in 1990 by her own MPs. John Major, in turn, suffered serious divisions in his *Cabinet* as well as rebellions in Parliament. In 1995, he even resigned the Conservative leadership and forced a re-election contest in an attempt to assert his authority. Even Blair, with large parliamentary majorities, faced serious ministerial resignations and on a range of issues – Iraq, foundation hospitals, and university tuition fees – suffered huge rebellions among Labour MPs. The lesson is clear. The very weakness of the Prime Minister seriously challenges the popular view that in Britain we have prime ministerial or presidential government.

- (a) Explain the term *Cabinet* used in the passage. (8 marks)
- (b) Discuss the view that modern British Prime Ministers are not too strong, but too weak. (22 marks)

END OF QUESTIONS

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